



Newsletter – 29 April 2005

This is the 68th in a series of occasional newsletters from the Victoria University centre of the International Institute of Modern Letters. For more information about any of the items, please email modernletters@vuw.ac.nz.

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1. Insiders Guide 2 gets green light

The Insider's Guide to Love is the follow-up to last year's successful *Insider's Guide to Happiness* television drama series, which emerged out of Peter Cox's work for the 2003 MA (Script) workshop. The Gibson Group is set to start filming in Wellington in June with the aid of nearly \$3 million funding from New Zealand on Air. Peter Cox has been involved with writing the new series, and word has it that while most of the characters will be new, the charming James (played by Will Hall) will be back.

2. Tim goes to Berlin

Tim Corballis will travel to Berlin in August as recipient of the 2005 Creative New Zealand Berlin Writers' Residency. Corballis completed his Masters in Creative Writing with distinction at Victoria University in 2000 and won the Adam Foundation Prize for his first novel, *Below*, which was published by Victoria University Press in 2001. His third novel, *The Fossil Pits*, is due from Victoria University Press later this year. In Berlin, Corballis will undertake research and work on his fourth novel, comprising three thematically linked novellas. At least one of the novellas is set in

Europe and partly in Berlin. He also hopes to develop his German to the point of being able to appreciate the original texts of works by German writers who have influenced him.

3. Emily goes to Iowa (and Tracey stays)

Emily Dobson is setting things in order before flying off to the Iowa Writers' Workshop as 2005 Schaeffer Fellow. She gets married next month in the garden at home in Kereru (Hawke's Bay) where she grew up, and has revealed that the groom's uncle will conduct the marriage ceremony, and the bride's brother will do a drum solo as the newlyweds sign the license. Her first book of poems *A Box of Bees* will be published by Victoria University Press in late July, just before Emily and her husband head off to Iowa. They will be taking over the attic apartment currently occupied by 2004 Schaeffer Fellow Tracey Hill, who is staying on in Iowa City for a second year to complete the MFA, and teach creative writing to undergrads. Tracey tells us she recently got together with 2003 Adam Prize winner Josh Greenberg in Michigan, where they played shuffleboard, went sledding and snow-shoeing, and visited The House of Jerky. She also kept up her sentimental attachment to New Zealand by attending an ANZAC day picnic with about thirty Antipodeans. The ANZAC biscuits were apparently more palatable than the buffalo jerky ('not for the fainthearted') she experienced in Michigan.

4. Waiata and words

South Islanders will get a good serving of poetry in two events scheduled for the next few days. Tonight at Te Kapowai (Richmond, Nelson) Cliff Fell, Hinemoana Baker, Rachel Bush and Gordon Challis will be joined by Richard Nunns (taonga puoro) and Paolo Grossi (guitar) for a night of poetry and music. This is also the opening date of Hinemoana's NZ Music Month tour to promote her album *Puawai*. And on 1 May at 3 pm Bill Manhire reads from his forthcoming collection, *Lifted*, at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. For event details and Hinemoana's complete national tour itinerary see the following links:

<http://www.tekapowai.co.nz/index.php?PageID=1&EventID=32>

http://www.cityofdunedin.com/city/?page=searchtools_whatson&date=01/05/2005&event=10763

<http://www.flyingpiglets.co.nz/tour.htm>

5. The expanding bookshelf (1)

Anthony McCarten's latest production, *Death of a Superhero* is published by Vintage, and brings together his talents as scriptwriter (*Ladies' Night*, *Via Satellite*) and novelist (*Spinners*, *Brilliance*). The action takes place in three acts, with a combination of prose and scripted text, and the novel seems to have the kind of feel-good factor that has left even sceptical reviewers uplifted.

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/index.cfm?c_id=134&ObjectID=10119628

<http://stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3240913a4501,00.html>
<http://www.listener.co.nz/printable,3843.sm>

6. Second trimester writing workshops

A reminder that applications for the second trimester workshops at the IIML are due by 1 June. Writing the Landscape is taught by Dinah Hawken, Kate De Goldi offers a masterclass in Writing for Young Adults and the Poetry Workshop is taught by Chris Price. The trimester begins on 4 July, and places are limited to 12 students per workshop. Application forms can be obtained by phoning the IIML, or downloading from the website: www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters

7. From the whiteboard

The workshop room at the IIML has a whiteboard on which miscellaneous thoughts on writing, exhortations to self-discipline and other pieces of serious and unserious wisdom appear and disappear as the year progresses. We'll be broadcasting selected quotes under this heading in future. This week, something from Iceland's Nobel Laureate, Halldor Laxness:

"There has perhaps never been a bird that flies as correctly as an aeroplane; yet all birds fly better than aeroplanes if they can fly at all. All birds are perhaps a little wrong, because an absolute once-and-for-all formula for a bird has never been found, just as all novels are bad because the correct formula for a novel has never been found." (*Under the Glacier*)

8. The expanding bookshelf (2)

Novels by Catherine Chidgey and William Brandt have recently been released in the UK and USA. *The Transformation* is now out in the UK, and in May Catherine Chidgey will appear at the *Guardian* Hay Festival with help from a new Book Council International Writers' Exchange scheme supported by Creative New Zealand. The *Guardian* review is at <http://books.guardian.co.uk/review/story/0,12084,1454032,00.html>

In February William Brandt's *The Book of the Film of the Story of my Life* was published by Warner Books, who seem to be putting some energy and imagination into promoting the novel. It has had a full-colour ad in the *NY Times Book Review*, appeared with a book crowner and a jacket wrap resembling celluloid, and 1500 copies were included in a 'goodie bag' handed out at the Screen Actors Guild awards by *People Magazine*. It was an Independent Booksellers pick of the month in February, and received favourable advance notice from Kirkus Reviews, where the starred review described it as 'agreeably oddball' and 'a charmer', and expressed the hope that they make a movie of it (Brandt in fact has a script in progress). *Publishers*

Weekly noted the book was ‘punctuated by excerpts from brilliantly bad screenplays and crackling dialogue’; presumably the script of *The Book of the Film* will rely on Brandt’s ability to write the latter, rather than the former.

9. Copyright Licensing Ltd Writers’ Awards

New Zealand writers of non-fiction books are invited to apply for two grants worth \$35,000 each in this year’s Copyright Licensing Ltd (CLL) Writers’ Awards. Last year the awards were presented to two Dunedin-based writers to enable them to devote time to a specific non-fiction writing project and to provide reasonable research expenses. David Eggleton is working on a contemporary guide to New Zealand cultural history. Lloyd Spencer Davis describes his work-in-progress as a science book, but also part travelogue, part personal memoir. Previous grants have gone to Sarah Quigley for a biography of Charles Brasch, and Paul Millar for a biography of Bill Pearson. This year the Board of Copyright Licensing Ltd hopes to encourage applications from writers with interests in the sciences, business, Maori and Pacific studies, the arts and beyond. Applicants must be New Zealand citizens or permanent residents and writers of proven merit. Applicants must submit details of a project planned or under way by 5pm on Friday 15 July 2005. Full application details are available on the website <http://www.copyright.co.nz> or by telephoning 09 480 2711.

10. Recent web reading

9/11 novel wins Foreign Fiction Prize

<http://enjoyment.independent.co.uk/books/news/story.jsp?story=633698>

Two views of PEN World Voices

<http://www.arabnews.com/?page=7§ion=0&article=62809&d=27&m=4&y=2005>

<http://www.gawker.com/news/media/books/pen-festival-puts-even-margaret-atwood-to-sleep-040190.php>

Chabon’s Holocaust hoax: an ongoing saga

<http://insidehighered.com/views/2005/04/21/mclemee>

<http://www.mobylikes.com/Maliszewski.html>

New Iowa Writers Workshop Director announced

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/18/books/18chan.html>

Griffin shortlist announced

<http://www.cbc.ca/story/arts/national/2005/04/07/Arts/griffinshortlist050407.html>

The Denniston Rose goes to Hollywood

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/index.cfm?c_id=134&ObjectID=10119894

The end of foetry

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/21/books/21poet.html?ex=1114747200&en=313b1114bd7d2d2b&ei=5070>

Philip Pullman lecture

<http://www.oxonianreview.org/issues/4-2/4-2-3.htm>

A poetry blog

<http://poesygalore.blogspot.com/>

The Philip Larkin website

<http://www.phiplarkin.com/>

Litblog co-op

<http://www.lbc.typepad.com/>

Tennessee Williams: poet

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/artsentertainment/2002240744_tennessewilliams14.html

The way they do things in Austria

<http://books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles/0,6109,1463314,00.html>

Collins on Cummmings

<http://slate.msn.com/id/2117098/>

Gilgamesh stripped

http://www.bookslut.com/features/2005_02_004388.php

Writers taking charge

<http://www.alternet.org/story/21792/>

Poetry on the street

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-poet21apr21,0,6184477.story?coll=la-home-headlines>

Mailer, Texas millionaire

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/25/books/25mail.html?>

Good writers seek good readers – are publishers good matchmakers?

<http://enjoyment.independent.co.uk/books/features/story.jsp?story=631835>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/25/books/25ster.html>

E-pistolary fiction

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20050425.wxemail25/BNStory/Entertainment/>

Poetic slough

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/berkshire/4489989.stm>

The cover art of romance

http://www.worldoflongmire.com/features/romance_novels/index.htm

Creative writing UK style

<http://enjoyment.independent.co.uk/books/features/story.jsp?story=633152>

11. Great lists of our time

Some phobias that could impede a writer's career:

Papyrophobia- Fear of paper

Leukophobia- Fear of the colour white

Melanophobia- Fear of the colour black

Chiophobia- Fear of hands

Isolophobia- Fear of solitude

Logophobia- Fear of words

Noctiphobia- Fear of the night

Cremnophobia- Fear of precipices

Enissophobia- Fear of criticism

Doxophobia- Fear of receiving praise

Macrophobia- Fear of long waits

Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia- Fear of long words

Kenophobia- Fear of voids or empty spaces

Dinophobia- Fear of dizziness or whirlpools

Nebulaphobia- Fear of fog

Metrophobia- Fear of poetry

Peniaphobia- Fear of poverty

Mnemophobia- Fear of memories

Nomatophobia- Fear of names

Symbolophobia- Fear of symbolism

Thaasophobia- Fear of sitting

Bathophobia- Fear of depth

Mythophobia- Fear of stories

Zelophobia- Fear of jealousy

Asymmetriphobia- Fear of asymmetrical things

Some phobias that probably wouldn't be a problem for a writer:

Clinophobia- Fear of going to bed

Tachophobia- Fear of speed

Mageiropophobia- Fear of cooking

Phengophobia- Fear of daylight or sunshine

Plutophobia- Fear of wealth

Anablephobia- Fear of looking up

Somniphobia- Fear of sleep

